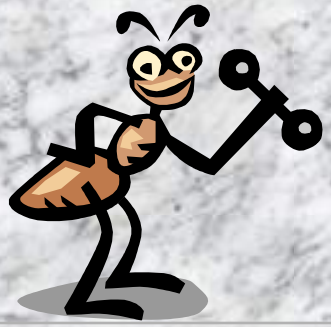
HEARING CONSERVATION HEALTH EDUCATION AND MOTIVATION

60 Minutes



The goal of the Hearing Conservation Program is to prevent occupationally related noise-induced hearing loss. In order to accomplish that goal, continual education of noise-exposed personnel is necessary.

Goal of the Hearing Conservation Program

- ***Documented hearing conservation education is required annually for all personnel in the Hearing Conservation Program.***
- ***It is the responsibility of the unit or shop supervisor to schedule and provide the annual training to noise-exposed personnel. It is usually the certified hearing conservation technician or safety officer who teaches the class.***
- ***You may contact the Occupational Health or Hearing Conservation Department to request a guest speaker to assist with the training, or request to borrow training materials.***
- ***Initial classes are required for personnel newly enrolled in the HCP and an annual refresher class is required thereafter.***

Provide a one hour training class that includes the following :

- Regulations / Instructions that provide direction and guidance on the requirements of the Hearing Conservation Program
- Elements of and rationale for the Hearing Conservation Program
- Discuss the local command's Hearing Conservation Program and personnel responsible for the individual components

Other optional educational information that can be provided

- Educate personnel on the anatomy of the ear and where the damage of a noise-induce hearing loss occurs
- Symptoms of a noise-induced hearing loss – explain the negative effects
- Discuss quality of life issues that come with the permanent loss of hearing
- Discuss the four P's associated with noise-induced hearing loss

Employee Motivation

- ***Behavior Must Change in order to Improve Hearing Protection Use***
- ***Re-enforce use of hearing protection in the presence of co-workers***
- ***Report non-compliance***
- ***Provide positive feedback to those who consistently wear HPD's***

Employee Motivation(cont.)

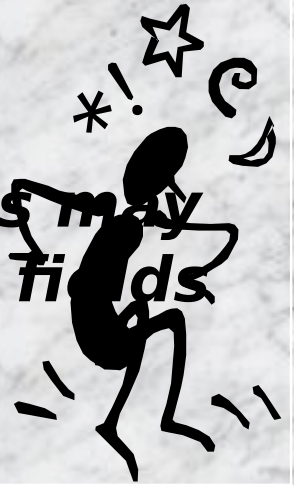
- ***Encourage management and supervisors to wear HPD's - lead by example***
- ***Allow personnel to choose the type of hearing protection they like best (as long as there is no medical or work related contra-indication)***

Employee Motivation(cont.)

- ***Recognize units or work centers having the lowest STS rates and highest compliance with annual testing and hearing protection use***
- ***Develop healthy, creative competition within or between units on use of hearing protection; have leadership involvement; leaders may decide to have a reward system for units/personnel with the best compliance, such as a trophy of the ear or earplug, or liberty time.***
- ***Provide statistics (obtain from Audiologist) on number of twenty-year-olds wearing hearing aids at the command***
- ***Get hearing impaired people to talk to units***
- ***Work with personnel having difficulty using hearing protection***

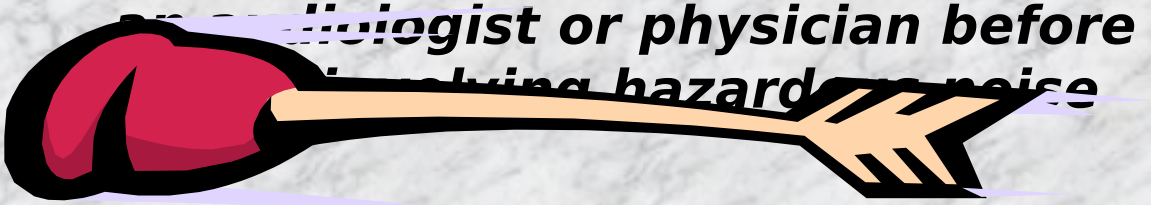
Impact of Hearing Loss on Employment

- ***Hearing loss can affect safety in the workplace and communication ability with co-workers***
- ***Individual commands may establish criteria for permanently excluding personnel with substantial hearing loss from working in a noise-hazardous environment***
- ***Repeated permanent threshold shifts may exclude workers from certain career fields***



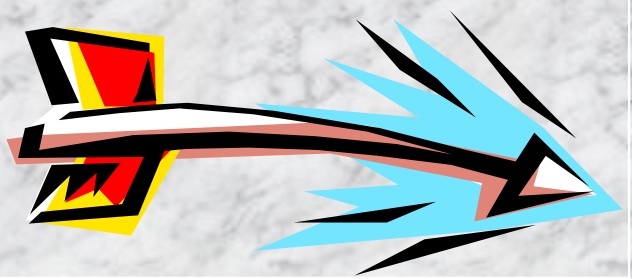
Impact of Hearing Loss on Employment(cont.)

- ***IAW OPNAVINST 5100.19, personnel having hearing loss that exceeds the 270 / 3 STS Rule will not be assigned to duties involving exposure to hazardous noise; this can effectively cancel a person's career (270 Rule = sum of thresholds in both ears at 3000, 4000, and 6000 Hz that exceeds 270 dB)***
- ***IAW OPNAVINST 5100.23, personnel in the HCP who have their reference audiogram re-established due to worsening hearing on three separate occasions, must obtain clearance from an audiologist or physician before returning to [illegible] involving hazardous noise***



Documentation

- ***Annual hearing conservation training must be documented in employee training records***
- ***Sign-in rosters documenting annual training must be kept on file with the unit or shop for inspection purposes for a minimum of 5 years***
- ***Copies of training rosters must be forwarded to the Safety Officer***



QUESTIONS???